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—John Cogley

THE

Commonweal

Extraordinary Advance

Islam in Africa

by James Kritzeck

National Political Conventions

"Alabama, Alaska, Arizona . . ."

by Albert B. Southwick

AUSCHWITZ'S TERRIBLE LOGIC . . . . . by Derek Morgan
A NOVEL FROM FRANCE . . . . . by William Dunlea
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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

TURN FOR THE WORSE

THE DIRECTION of domestic political dialogue in this country has taken a sharp turn for the worse in recent weeks. For this deterioration in the moral climate, Mr. Khrushchev and certain American political figures share the responsibility. Nothing Americans can do is likely to curb the Russian premier's practice of intemperate attack. We are entitled to expect, however, that our own political leaders will display common sense and moderation in a rapidly worsening world situation.

We may never know the final answers to the questions posed by Mr. Khrushchev's conduct immediately before, during and after the Paris meeting of the Big Four, although we should continue to make every effort to plumb this mystery. But whatever the verdict on the reasons behind current Soviet strategy, the men in the Kremlin should not be allowed to determine the tone and character of our own political debates at home. And yet it has been obvious ever since the failure of the summit meeting that there is real danger that this will be allowed to happen.

No doubt there are those who find cause for rejoicing in this state of affairs. From a purely partisan point of view, the Eisenhower luck has held. If Mr. Khrushchev had behaved in more rational fashion, the Administration would have had to account more fully to the American people for its handling of the U-2 incident, followed as it has been by anxiety and mistrust on the part of our allies on a scale Mr. Khrushchev himself was never able to inspire. Given the personal attacks on Mr. Eisenhower by the Russian premier, however, a real debate on a serious question of national policy is becoming more and more difficult. To question the wisdom of the Administration is increasingly equated with endorsement of Mr. Khrushchev's position; to suggest that Mr. Eisenhower and his advisers made a serious blunder is to fail in a patriotic duty of defending the President of the United States from attack by the enemy.

DAVID Lawrence summed up this point of view in a recent column headed "Reactions to Khrushchev Stir Doubts on Patriotism." Wrote Mr. Lawrence: "Time was when in the midst of war neither scribe nor politician ventured to give aid and comfort to the enemy. Time was when the citizen felt a tingle of emotion go up and down his spine as he sang 'The Star Spangled Banner' or saluted the flag. . . . But things seem to be different now. The President of the United States is insulted and yet some writers continue to furnish aid and comfort to the press of the Soviet Union by denouncing Mr. Eisenhower and holding him culpable for errors he couldn't possibly have avoided and still protect the safety of the American people against surprise attack. . . ."

This is a frank statement of an increasingly popular thesis, one which we reject entirely. We doubt that any American would subscribe to the kind of attack made on Mr. Eisenhower by the Soviet premier. But this does not mean that all criticism of U.S. policy is, in Mr. Lawrence's phrase, giving "aid and comfort to the enemy." Indeed, quite the opposite would be true, for to fail to criticize, to hold one's tongue out of some mistaken idea of what patriotism involves—this would be the course most likely to aid the enemy.

If the present trend continues, it takes little imagination to anticipate what direction the coming Presidential campaign could easily take. Mr. Eisenhower has been denounced by Khrushchev; that makes him one hundred per cent perfect and confers on all his actions an *ex post facto* guar-

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antee against error. The Russian premier referred to Vice President Nixon some weeks ago as a goat in the cabbage patch; this gives Mr. Nixon a great advantage over Mr. Rockefeller or any other rival who has not been similarly denounced. The Russian premier sent non-denunciatory cables to four Democratic leaders after the failure at Paris; this means that Senator Johnson and Adlai Stevenson, who were among the four, are "not as hard" on the Soviet Union as Senators Kennedy and Symington, who did not receive cablegrams. But neither of these latter two men, of course, is in as good a shape as Mr. Nixon, for if they received no cables from the Russian premier, neither was their loyalty attested to by his calling them goats.

This way, obviously, lies political madness. The fact of the matter remains, Mr. Khrushchev or no, that the American people are not divided on the subject of Communism and the danger to the free world posed by the U.S.S.R. The only disagreement is on the best means of meeting the Communist challenge and preserving freedom for ourselves and the world. This is the foreign policy issue that should be debated in the coming campaign—not which candidate was called the nastiest name by Mr. Khrushchev. We see no reason why Americans should let the Russian premier decide who will be our next President.

PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION in the United States has, geographically, a checkered pattern. Once again, for those who might doubt it, a study shows clearly that racial discrimination is not limited to the South. The North, even the "liberal" city of New York, has its own patterns of discrimination. Most public attention is directed, quite properly, to the South, where the most entrenched habits of segregation are met by the most persistent and spectacular means of opposition. The North, for example, has seen nothing to equal the lunch-counter protests which have spread so rapidly through many Southern cities. But neither is there reason in the North for such spontaneous, popular demonstrations. Where the discrimination is more subtle, so too must be the means of combatting it.

The most recent, large-scale Negro protests in the South started because the Negroes properly resented the fact that many stores were happy to sell them merchandise but would not allow them to be served at lunch counters. What started as a small protest against such indignities was so evidently meaningful that it burgeoned into a movement with far-reaching consequences. The Southern Regional Council has recently reported that merchants who have desegregated their lunch counters have suffered neither violence nor boycott. Where managers insist upon continuing segregated lunch counters, business has fallen off from fifteen to sixty-five per cent. The lesson has not been lost even on those who would wish to discount it.

In this instance an obvious cause for resentment inspired an obvious and effective counter-measure. The advances thus made against discrimination are welcome. But there are more subtle discriminatory practices, in both the South and the North, which are more difficult to combat. A small study by New York City's Commission on Intergroup Relations indicates that almost fifteen per cent of New York's East Side restaurants discriminate against dark-skinned delegates to the U.N. These delegates are not refused service. Instead they are seated in uncomfortable locations and given extremely poor service. The implicit suggestion, of course, is that they would do better elsewhere.

In commenting on these practices, the chairman of the Commission pointed out that the chances of insulting foreign diplomats increased as new African nations were admitted to the U.N. and sent additional Negro delegations. This, certainly, is true, but it would be a sad commentary on democracy in the United States if we improved our domestic situation only because we were concerned about international relations. While we should hesitate to dismiss anything that helps to remove prejudice and parochialism in race relations, the only lasting basis for proper relations will be found in democratic principles affirming the intrinsic value and dignity of the person. These are the principles that must be injected into discussions and actions concerning discrimination, racial prejudice and the fight for civil rights, that must find a voice in, for example, the national political conventions where will be nominated the next President of the United States.

NEW HOSPITAL STRIKE?

A HOSPITAL strike is unquestionably a cruel and repugnant thing. Yet the city of New York suffered such a strike only a year ago, and there is now grave danger that it will suffer such a strike again this year.

The situation is not in its essentials much differ-

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ent from last year's. Non-profit hospitals are exempted by law from federal and state legislation pertaining to the right of employees to collective bargaining, a minimum wage and other such protections. On the basis of this legal exemption, the administrators of the hospitals in question have refused to recognize the right of hospital workers to form a union and to be represented by that union in collective bargaining.

Local 1199 of the Drug and Hospital Employees Union, the same group which led last year's strike, counters with the same set of charges: that a majority of New York's hospital workers wish to be represented by Local 1199, that without the right to collective bargaining these workers are reduced to economic helplessness, that they are exploited by the hospitals by means of low pay and horrible working conditions.

As was the case last year, bitter feelings have been expressed by both sides, and harsh accusations have been tossed back and forth. But a couple of new elements have been added to the controversy. One is the fact that in the past year the union has demonstrated that it is willing and able to work with hospital administrators in the interests of both parties and the public good. Unionization of workers in several of the city's private, for-profit hospitals has not been the catastrophe which administrators so often predict. Furthermore, in recognition of the universal insistence that strikes at hospitals must not be permitted to occur, Local 1199 has signed a legally enforceable no-strike contract with one of New York's hospitals and expresses its willingness to sign such a contract with any hospital which will recognize its right to represent the hospital's workers.

Another new development in the current dispute is the possibility of Communist elements in Local 1199. Allegations to this effect were heard last year, especially about union president Leon J. Davis, and they have been intensified this year. A New York City Labor Commissioner said that the union had been refused certification by the city because its officials had refused to appear for questioning by the Labor Commissioner, but his statement was immediately denied by union spokesmen. Mr. Davis said that he and other officers of the union had signed non-Communist affidavits as required by the Taft-Hartley Act and that they were willing to be questioned by the New York Labor Commissioner but had been prevented from appearing by the pressure of union activity. Mr. Davis denounced the charge that his union had been refused certification for possible Communist connections as "a McCarthyite smear" on the part of the New York Hospital Association.

The excitement engendered by allegations of Communism is understandable, of course. Communist domination of a union is a serious question, and when the union represents workers in hospitals, and religious hospitals at that, the anxiousness of hospital administrators and the public is certainly not uncalled for. But there is more to be said than that. In the first place, the accusations against Mr. Davis and his union remain only accusations, and the American people should not have to be reminded that the slogan "where there's smoke there's fire" has served them badly in the past.

In the second place, the accusations against Mr. Davis and Local 1199 are disquieting, and seem automatically to strengthen the position of the hospitals, but actually they have no bearing on the real points of dispute. These points have to do with the questions of strikes in hospitals, the right of workers to collective bargaining and the admittedly wretched wages received by these workers.

We wish that the current hospital dispute had not been made messy and complicated by the issue of Communism or Communist sympathy. We wish that the present confusion had been avoided through action years ago by one of the established unions with a clear record of anti-Communism (and it is to the discredit of these unions that they took no interest in the plight of poor and insignificant unskilled workers). Nevertheless, the situation is what it is, and, aside from all such regrets, it turns ultimately on the simple issues mentioned above.

On the question of hospital strikes, we believe that the pertinent federal and state legislation was unjust and inadequate when it took from these workers the right to bargain collectively and failed to provide anything in its place, failed to provide some sort of machinery to make collective bargaining—or strikes—unnecessary. Concerning the hospital workers' shocking wages and conditions of work, we believe that hospital management has failed scandalously to meet its obligations—if not legal, then moral—to provide a just wage, decent working conditions, and at least some sort of voice in the determining of these conditions.

We said much the same thing in the hospital dispute last year, and we see no reason to alter our convictions. While, in the present controversy, we cannot condone a hospital strike, we see justice and wisdom in the proposal by the union to sign a no-strike contract, with negotiated terms of wages,

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conditions, grievances and arbitration. The objections by the hospitals—a fear of future strikes, a fear that worker efficiency would be impaired by "divided loyalties," doubts that workers really want the union, fears that Mr. Davis has Communist connections—seem, on the other hand, so easily dispelled, or so irrelevant, as to raise the question even of good faith.

OFFSHORE OIL

THE ACT WHICH Congress passed seven years ago on the title to the undersea oilfields brought to completion one stage of the controversy about the rightful beneficiaries of this substantial natural resource. There were many who argued vehemently against extending the rights of coastal states beyond the traditional three-mile limit. The strongest opponents of these state claims held that such vast stores of wealth were part of the whole nation's patrimony rather than the endowment of any individual states. They further contended that there was a danger that individual states would be far less firm than the federal government in resisting the efforts of the oil companies and other commercial entrepreneurs to turn large sectors of these vast underwater reserves to extensive private profit. Those who opposed state sovereignty over these resources found little to commend the 1953 Submerged Lands Act.

This legislation created possible exceptions to the three-mile limit when it provided that Gulf states which claimed jurisdiction as far as three marine leagues (10.35 miles) out from their shorelines could become entitled to it if they could establish a historical claim to such a limit. Hence the Supreme Court has been reviewing historical claims. In finding that Texas and Florida are entitled to extend their boundaries under the 1953 law—and that Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi are not—the Court held that Texas' claim was recognized in the treaty which ended the Mexican War. Florida, for its part, was held to have established a substantiation of its claims in the terms under which it was admitted to the Union after our Civil War.

For the moment Florida's offshore oil operations tend to be of rather minor importance; the same is true of Alabama and Mississippi. But for Texas the ruling has large immediate economic consequences, while denial to Louisiana involves the three hundred million dollars in accumulated royalties it was expecting to obtain through a decision in its favor. But far beyond this, it is estimated that a third of all the vast untapped oil resources of the United States lie off the shores of Louisiana.

An important factor about title to such oilfields is the extraordinary proportion of drillings that produce. Only about one out of nine drillings produces a "strike" on land, while two out of every three drillings made in these Gulf of Mexico oilfields have proved productive. And "wildcatters," on the average, are sixteen times as successful in locating oil under these waters than they normally are when they drill for oil on land. The vast reserves of the Gulf oilfields, their importance for individual consumers, American industry and national defense, and their potentialities for successful exploitation make them a prize indeed.

The obvious answer to the Court's decision on these various historical claims is a new law which would supplant the Submerged Lands Act and do away with such exceptions. Is such a development likely in an election year under an Administration which has long shown itself favorable to "states' rights" and the fullest claims of private enterprise? In a way it seems unlikely, especially since important Southern Democrats in Congress tend to support the Administration in its approach to such matters.

The Court decision, however, has actually reopened the whole controversy, and its seeming discrimination between states can hardly be universally popular in America. Much depends on what develops between now and the completion of the conventions, but it is possible that this decision will throw such a spotlight on the question of the conservation of natural resources—and their utilization for the general benefit—that it could become one of the major domestic issues in the Presidential campaign. If so the Court will have done the nation a service by rendering its decision at this pre-convention time.

Summer Schedule

In line with the practice of many other magazines, and following the precedent established last summer, The Commonweal will appear on alternate weeks during July and August. Forthcoming issues will be dated as follows: June 24, July 8, July 22, August 5, August 19 and September 2. From then on The Commonweal will return to its normal weekly printing schedule.

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Islam in Africa

Among the native peoples of tropical Africa, Islam has found its most enthusiastic converts since the Mongols and the Turks

by JAMES KRITZECK

A LITTLE UNDERSTOOD and even little-known fact about Africa is that it is going steadily, and in some places rapidly, Moslem. The notion that "Moslem Africa" clings to the southern Mediterranean coast and fades into the sands of the Sahara Desert has been a false one almost from the start; now it is growing falser by the day. Islam is in the jungle, the savannah and the veld. Partly by design and partly by its good fortune, it has found in the native peoples of tropical Africa its most enthusiastic converts since the Mongols and the Turks. This is a matter of gravest importance for the future of that continent and of the world.

Already one out of every three Africans is a Moslem. To be sure, this startling ratio is due largely to the more populous northern regions of the continent which came under Moslem control at the time of the first expansive thrust of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries. Tropical Africa is a long, long way from being fully Islamized, and Islam's gains there have not always been as rapid or as inexorable as its adherents (and just as frequently their adversaries) have been wont to claim.

Nevertheless, the direction of the trend is undeniable; it is estimated that for every convert to Christianity in Africa today, there are as many as nine or ten converts to Islam. Whole villages and tribes in both West and East Africa which remained stolidly "pagan" despite centuries, in some cases, of Christian missionary activity have been known to turn, sometimes within the space of a few months, Moslem. Not a single African country is without its Moslem dispersion. For that matter, Islam's southward journey through the continent might be considered in one sense as already finished: there are at least twenty-three mosques in Capetown.

Statistics on the Moslem expansion are exceedingly difficult to obtain and, when obtainable, to trust; a census in many parts of Africa is out of the question, and the motives for falsification of information are many. However, the most trustworthy present estimates invariably show a substantially larger Moslem population in most tropical African countries than our standard source-books would lead us to believe. There are almost twice as many Moslems in the Belgian Congo as the old "official" statistics indicate, and the same may be true of Tanganyika and Ethiopia as well. Of course it is possible that the older statistics simply erred in the direction of under-estimating the size of these Moslem populations, but in many areas the disparity is more likely to be accounted for by the tremendous numbers of Moslem converts in recent decades. In the French Sudan (now part of Mali), for example, that rate of increase has been at least fifteen per cent in the past twenty years.

The present line of Moslem penetration in tropical Africa runs jaggedly across the northern three-quarters of West Africa, with a generous dip into Nigeria, eastward to French Equatorial Africa and the Sudan. Then there is a diagonal southern sweep touching the eastern Congo down East Africa to northern Mozambique. Of course the territory included in that diagonal sweep is only partially Moslem; the Moslem "arc" within it includes eastern Ethiopia and the Somali territories, northern and coastal Kenya, and parts of Uganda and Tanganyika, joining the eastern Congo and Nyasaland in the Central African Federation in a line running eastward to the Indian Ocean. Almost untouched, though with sizable Moslem minorities in some areas, is the very considerable bloc of lands comprising the western Congo, Angola, the Rhodesias, and the Union of South Africa.

ON ITS AFRICAN "frontier," Islam is a new Islam, sometimes no more than a few years old; yet paradoxically it is usually Islam of an old sort, vir-

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tually untouched by any "modernist" attempts at change. Just as there is not one Africa, nor one Islam, so there is not one African Islam. Beside the neo-Moslems of scores of Bantu African racial stocks, there are swaggering Berber tribesmen from the northern deserts, Syrian tradesmen who read the Damascus newspapers, descendants of the Arab slave-runnners who commute in "dhows" with the ports of Arabia and the Persian Gulf, and Indian, Pakistani and Malayan immigrants. All types and sects of Islam are represented, with many orientations beside the major one for all Moslems, Mecca. There are Sunnites of the Maliki legal school oriented toward Morocco, pockets of Shiites oriented toward the shrines of Iraq, Sudanese converts oriented toward Egypt, Somalis oriented toward Arabia, Asian Ismaili followers of the Aga Khan oriented presumably toward the Côte d'Azur. and Ahmadiyyah missionaries and their converts oriented toward Rabweh in Pakistan.

Since Moslems are no longer called upon to act as one *ummah* (community of true believers) in any practical sense and there is no longer anyone who might legitimately call upon them to do so (President Nasser could not aspire to the defunct caliphate and King Hussein of Jordan, who could, would not), and since the differences of sect do not engender that nervousness and hostility characteristic of some Christian sects toward one another, these surface divisions can more easily be concealed and neutralized as Islam goes its apostolic way in Africa. Even more significant is the manner in which Africa has acted upon Islam. There is now a tropical African Islam with definable characteristics which distinguish it more or less sharply from Islam in other parts of the world. Not only is it possible to come across a sign reading "Abdullah's Liquor Store" among Moslems who neither fast nor make the pilgrimage to Mecca, but it is also possible to discover unabashed and unmistakable animistic survivals in neo-Moslem ritual and belief. Indeed, the typical native African Moslem is probably oriented toward nothing further away than his village mosque.

Islam was in Africa even before Mohammed left Mecca for Medina in 622 (the hijrah or "Hegira" from which Moslems date their era), and it penetrated deeply into the continent during the Middle Ages. Although there is a fresh and uniquely successful Moslem proselytism in our times, it must not be forgotten that Islam has enjoyed a steady southward expansion into Africa for many centuries.

The recent Moslem expansion may be seen as a continuation and acceleration of that historical process. Four major factors help to explain the acceleration. The first of them is the European influence on Africa during the past century, an influence which radically changed the previous tropical African social, political and religious situation. A new type of African civilization, Western (or in this case Northern) "law and order," communications, cities and economic enterprises brought about a deterioration of old communal ties and ways.

The second factor is the traditional behavior of Islam in a minority situation. Because Islam divides the world into only two parts, the abode of Islam *dar al-Islam* and the abode of warfare *(dar al-harb)* its attitude toward non-Moslems is obviously quite rigidly defined. Officially Islam remains steadfastly inassimilable, and does not normally hesitate in its choice of means to achieve the victory which it regards as inevitable for itself. A third factor is the resurgence of the Moslem states of the northern part of Africa, particularly after the decline and fall of the Ottoman empire and more particularly during the past few decades. The fourth, and perhaps most important factor is a composite of unusally favorable circumstances which render Islam attractive to the peoples of tropical Africa today.

ISLAM CAN be presented as an African religion by Africans to Africans. It has no color bar of any kind; though color-consciousness cannot be said to be wholly absent from it, at least the manifestations have not proven obnoxious to most Africans. Islam is in its essentials simple and clear and in its non-essentials complicated and vague. It has a one-line creed ("There is no god but God and Mohammed is His messenger") and conversion is painlessly achieved merely by the believing recitation of that formula. The so-called "Five Pillars" of the Islamic faith (profession of faith, prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage to Mecca) are left very largely to individuals' consciences. Islam is not very demanding. It is no "church" and no difficult standards of learning or observance are required either to become or to remain a Moslem.

Islam is resilient, and provides generous scope for ritualism and "particularism." So resilient is it in Africa, indeed, that it seems to permit all types of animistic practices, not excluding "ju-ju" and black magic, to be retained after conversion. Islam's ethic tolerates and in significant respects accords with that of animist Africa. It is not only tribal dancing and drums that it accommodates, but beliefs as well. Polygamy is an outstanding example. Since tropical Africa is overwhelmingly polygamous as it is, obviously the Islamic permission of polygamy does not in itself provide an active incentive to conversion; nevertheless the tribal chieftain with a harem of twenty is not likely to be so attracted on this point by, let us say, Christianity. Genealogy-conscious Islam also accords with many African beliefs concerning the individual's relationship to his ancestors and relatives.

From its own tribal origins Islam has been particularly suited and geared to tribes, especially the no-

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madic. The largest percentage of its converts in history have been tribal peoples, and for purposes of conversion the "tribal" can conveniently replace the "universal brotherhood" aspect of its message. There is hardly one nomadic tribe north of the equator which has not accepted Islam. Islam is also geared, in a more inclusive sense, to the whole African social situation; for both, religion and society are one. Islam thus provides a justification for the African "feudalism" which Christianity, for instance, almost guarantees to destroy. There is a day-to-day rhythm of Islamic communal life which does not depend at all upon keeping a sabbath or erecting a church in the Gothic style.

Islam can also be adopted gradually, in stages, without violent changes in the pattern of African life. The penetration of Islam into an African village or tribe normally follows the same sequence of such stages. First a Moslem merchant, "marabout" (holy man), "mallam" (teacher) or immigrant arrives in the community and begins his activities. Later Moslem amulets, practices, and perhaps beliefs appear side by side with the animistic ones. A third stage is reached when these practices and beliefs are consciously recognized and adopted as Moslem, and a few conversions take place. A fourth stage is required for the community to be incorporated in a real way into Islam, with Koranic schools and closer connections with other parts of the African Moslem world.

Islam can be preached by any Moslem and any Moslem can perform every basic religious function. Islam has been successfully spread in Africa by merchants and traders, as it was spread among the early Turkish peoples, and by shifting Moslem populations. Yet it is now, more than ever, a proselytizing religion in Africa, consciously endeavoring to win the African animists (very few of its native converts are Christians) to itself. The "marabous" and "mallams" have an uncanny ability to become absorbed into village and tribal life, dispensing amulets, medicines and advice, and eventually to become vital to that life.

Conversion to Islam in tropical Africa brings with it an ostentatious feeling of "belonging" and the possibility of wider communication, better employment, and generally greater social mobility within the relatively higher Islamic segment of African society. In Islam the native finds something less clannish, more "respectable." In more than one place the different type of clothing worn by Moslems constitutes in itself an attraction to Islam. Islam is no longer relying so heavily on its advantage in having reached many remote areas before the arrival of missionaries of other religions. Increasingly it is providing educational and social benefits; unlike its chief rivals, the Christian missionaries, it usually provides these benefits only to Moslems, and, ironically, it wins even more converts by doing so.

THE EUROPEAN colonial powers, when they entered Africa, engendered in many Africans a feeling of inferiority about their animism. But the religions which these powers brought with them, mainly Catholic and Protestant Christianity, apart from appearing as too difficult and complicated a substitute, became directly and intimately connected in the African mind with the political forces which many Africans were coming, rightly or wrongly, to despise. Likewise, the evident contradiction between the material values which the colonialists worshipped and the spiritual ones which they professed was by no means lost on the Africans.

Into this vacuum Islam has come in strength, and all the stronger for being untainted by the recent conventional colonialism. In not a few areas the active encouragement or at least passive allowance of Moslem expansion by the colonial administrations, a policy bitterly criticized by the Christian missionaries, has been an enormously useful boost to the cause of Islam. At least as important, in recent decades, has been the example and moral support of the newly independent Moslem states in northern Africa. By this means Islam has associated itself with ideals and goals dear to nearly every African heart.

It is difficult to disengage this complex of factors in order to determine the cause for Moslem success in any specific place or time. Certainly the motivations vary in importance; often they assist one another and just as often they contradict one another. It has been Islam's great fortune to reap a good harvest from a mixed seed-bag and many different soils.

Islam has brought many benefits to the Africans whom it has converted. It has always clothed them. It has brought, all told, a higher ethic and a truly religious "cause" with which individual Africans can feel identified and busy themselves. It has often strengthened in the convert at one and the same time his sense of individuality and that of belonging to a community. Unfortunately, Islam in Africa has also shown a will to dominate, subjugate and dictate. It has been lacking in fully appropriate and appealing social means and goals, notably in the fields of health and education. Above all, it has tended to be anti-white and anti-West.

The political use to which Islam's success in Africa has been put is especially uncheering. Well concealing the secular nature of the Pan-Arab movement, Egypt has made a great point of championing the cause of African Islam and of grasping the propaganda value of playing (or attempting to play) a leading role in all anti-European independence efforts in tropical Africa. Morocco has undertaken to play a similar "protective" role in West Africa. Far more menacing than either of these initiatives, however, is the often-repeated opinion of the Soviet Union that Islam is pav-

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ing the way for the triumph of universal socialism in tropical Africa.

OF COURSE, as matters change, Islam is likely to encounter new difficulties in tropical Africa, and many of the factors at present working in its favor are likely to decrease in importance and be replaced by others less favorable. Then, too, religious pretense is a not uncommon feature in tropical Africa. Just how deeply and permanently Islam has taken root in many places there is impossible to determine. Certainly if the learned teachers of the mosques of Cairo and Fez had any notion of some of the things called "Moslem" in tropical Africa, their hair would stand on end. But those who incline to regard Islam as a "half-way house" between animism and Christianity are equally certainly misled; history affords no example of any people once converted to Islam turning subsequently in large numbers to any other religion.

There have been a few examples of apostasy from Islam back to animism or to Christianity among tropical Africans, but apostasy is treason in a Moslem state. There have also been some strong statements from African Moslem leaders to the effect that they are not disposed to take orders from non-African Moslems and feel no special need for the "protection" of their co-religionists to the north. Generally speaking, however, Islam's greatest advantage in tropical Africa has been that so little resistance of any kind has been shown to it. Christianity of course appears in the role of Islam's competitor for the souls of animists, but does little to meet the challenge of Islam itself apologetically. In Ghana a law outlawing political parties on the basis of religion or tribe has curtailed Islam politically and in Tanganyika an economic co-operative system has virtually ended Moslem penetration by traders in one area. But apart from a few such measures and of course the indubitable strength of Christianity in some countries, Islam appears to have a clear field in tropical Africa.

Africa is a continent of awakening energies. It is a continent with a future that promises to be even greater than its past. Ultimate decisions about the nature of its future will eventually rest with the Africans themselves. Will they decide wisely or unwisely? Will they sacrifice some part of their self-interest to win immediate victories in another part, or will they choose the more difficult path of patient scrutiny? Will there some day be a strong Pan-African movement, or an alignment of North versus South to complicate or even replace that of East versus West?

Whatever happens, it seems safe to predict that the muezzin's cry will be heard from minarets in every part of Africa.

NATIONAL POLITICAL CONVENTIONS

"Alabama, Alaska, Arizona . . ."

by ALBERT B. SOUTHWICK

WHATEVER a political convention is—democracy in action, the corruption of smoke-filled rooms, or merely the greatest show on earth—the season is upon us. "A European," James Bryce wrote half a century ago, "is astonished to see nearly one thousand men prepare to transact the two most difficult pieces of business an assembly can undertake, the solemn consideration of their principles and the selection of the person they wish to place at the head of the nation, in the sight and hearing of twelve or fourteen thousand other men and women. Observation of what follows does not lessen the astonishment. The convention presents, in sharp contrast and frequent alternation, the two most striking features of Americans in public—their orderliness and their excitability. Everything is done according to strict rule, with a scrupulous observance of small formalities which European meetings would ignore or despise. Points of order almost too fine for a parliament are taken, argued, decided on by the Chair, to whom everyone bows. Yet the passions that sway the multitude are constantly bursting forth in storms of cheering or hissing at an allusion to a favorite or an obnoxious name, and five or six speakers may take the floor together, shouting and gesticulating at each other till the chairman obtains a hearing for one of them."

The amazement felt by Bryce at the spectacle of our national political conventions has struck many other foreign observers. In many respects the America national convention is a unique phenomenon, hardly less deserving of study than the Constitution itself. Political parties of other free nations have conferences and con-

Mr. Southwick, appearing in The Commonweal for the first time, discusses the background of the nominating conventions.

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claves, but these do not have as their purpose the choosing of the man who not only will be the party leader for the next four years but who also, it is hoped, will take over the full executive power of the nation after the ensuing election. Pragmatic rather than ideological, the American national political convention is a distinctively American response to the vast and continuing problem of organizing political parties and choosing national leaders able to command sufficient attention and respect to govern a sprawling, diversified land and people.

The Founding Fathers never envisaged any such thing as a national political convention and probably would have been dismayed to see one in action. Their own tidy plan called for an Electoral College, composed of distinguished men selected by the state legislatures, who every four years would cast their votes in their respective states for the man they considered best qualified for the post. Partisan or "factional" considerations were to be excluded. The man who received the highest number of votes was to be elected President, the one with the second highest number, Vice President. This high-minded plan worked for the first two elections, when George Washington was the only conceivable Presidential candidate, and then lapsed into shadowy desuetude

IN 1796 both Adams and Jefferson were chosen by Congressional caucuses of the Federalist and anti-Federalist factions, and the caucus remained the accepted mode for picking candidates until 1824. In 1828, in his battle against "King Caucus," Andrew Jackson was nominated by the Tennessee and other state legislatures, and by popular gatherings in various states, to be the standard-bearer of the Democrats. The time was ripe for a new and more democratic method for picking Presidential candidates, and the honor of holding the first national nominating convention went to the otherwise forgotten Anti-Masonic Party, which enjoyed a brief and lurid heyday in the early 1830's.

The Anti-Masonic Party met in Baltimore in September, 1831, to nominate candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency. The National Republicans held their first convention in December of that year, nominated Henry Clay and John Sergeant, and adopted a series of "resolutions"—the direct ancestor of today's party plaforms. On May 21, 1832, the Democratic Party held its first convention, also in Baltimore, where President Jackson established another political tradition —the right of a Presidential candidate to pick his running mate. Hostile to John C. Calhoun, who had served as Vice President for his first term, Jackson made known his preference for Martin Van Buren. The convention, not without some signs of rebellion, did as Old Hickory bade.

Thus, within the space of eight months, three national political conventions were held for the first time. The organizers and operators of those lively gatherings could hardly have known that they were inaugurating a political innovation of lasting significance, yet such was the case. The convention has become such a necessary part of our government that it is hard for us today to imagine how our Constitution would work without it.

At first blush, the Constitution and the national political convention seem an oddly mismatched pair of institutions. The first was the product of eighteenth century political philosophy, a grandchild of the orderly minds of Locke, Puffendorf, and Montesquieu. The second was a purely pragmatic response to the political stresses of Jacksonian Democracy. Yet the wedding of the two has brought this country through a century and a quarter of expansion, war, radicalism, reaction, depression, boom, and all the other wrenches and twists of history. Twenty-three of our thirty-three Presidents have been selected by national political conventions, including Lincoln, Polk, Cleveland, Wilson, both Roosevelts, Truman and Eisenhower. As Harold Laski noted in his *The American Presidency,* the American system has been at least as successful as the British parliamentary system in producing national leaders of caliber.

Not the least impressive thing about the convention, considering its haphazard advent on the political stage, is its durability. By 1840 it had assumed practically the identical form that it retains today. The Democratic two-thirds rule, adopted by the very first Democratic convention in 1832, remained untouched until 1936, when Franklin D. Roosevelt finally ended it. There is little doubt that if Henry Clay were to walk into either of the conventions this summer he would feel perfectly at home as soon as the television apparatus was explained to him. Around him he would see the same sort of blocs, coalitions, conferences, pledges, deals, bargains, accusations and general tumult that marked the conventions of his day. The delegates, he would quickly note, would be the same sort of people—senators, representatives, governors, members of state legislatures, county officials, businessmen, and ward politicians —who made up the conventions in the 1840's. He would immediately feel a rapport with the convention's key figures—the men who, in the last analysis, would be making the important bargains and decisions leading to the consensus that such-and-such candidate was, all things considered, the most "available" of the possible choices.

JOHN C. CALHOUN, the stern political philosopher of minority states' rights, would also nod his shaggy head in agreement with the convention process as it has operated for the past century and a quarter. Calhoun's celebrated doctrine of the "concurrent majority" is

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nowhere more honored than in a national political convention, which instinctively proceeds on the assumption that the nominee must not be obnoxious to any powerful minority group. If his stand seems doubtful in any respect, pledges and reassurances must be given. Pure and simple majority rule is not enough when it comes to choosing the man who may lead the nation after the next election.

As Calhoun put it: "There are two different modes in which the sense of the community may be taken; one, simply, by the right of suffrage, unaided; the other, by the right through a proper organism. Each collects the sense of the majority. But one regards numbers only and considers the whole community as a unit. . . . The other, on the contrary, regards interest as well as number—considering the community as made up of different and conflicting interests . . . and takes the sense of each, through its appropriate organ. . . . The former of these I shall call the numerical or absolute majority; . . . and the latter, the concurrent or constitutional majority. . . . As there can be no constitution without the negative power and no negative power without the concurrent majority, it follows, necessarily, that where the numerical majority has the sole control of the government, there can be no constitution; as constitution implies limitation or restriction. . . . And hence the numerical, unmixed with the concurrent majority, necessarily forms, in all cases, absolute government."

The fact that Calhoun used this doctrine to justify state nullification of Federal legislation should not be allowed to obscure the fact that his exposition of the concurrent majority's role penetrates to the heart of American political pragmatism. Seen in this light, the national political convention becomes a singular expression of the American genius for democratic government. Despite its boisterousness, it is rooted in the same conservative assumptions that inform the Constitution, although it lacks the studied rationale of that noted document.

Nevertheless, the national convention, for the past half-century, has not commanded universal approbation. In fact, a persistent undercurrent of dissatisfaction has been present ever since the turn of the century, when Robert M. La Follette was beginning his remarkable career. This protest reached its high point in 1912, when the Republican convention brusquely ignored the manifest wishes of rank and file Republican voters by sticking with William Howard Taft instead of turning to Theodore Roosevelt.

Since then—perhaps because the conventions have listened more carefully to popular opinion—the protest movement has tapered off into occasional explosions of frustration such as Estes Kefauver's demand in 1952, after the Democratic convention of that year ignored his impressive record of primary victories to settle on Adlai Stevenson, that the convention system be so thoroughly revamped as to make it a different sort of institution entirely. "The convention system," wrote Kefauver angrily, "is a mockery of our democratic processes . . . an easy tool of the slick manipulators and the unscrupulous kingmakers."

Kefauver's outburst was along classic lines. The convention, wrote Ostrogorski, is "a colossal travesty of popular institutions." H. L. Mencken dourly noted that "the real business of a national convention is done down under the stage, in dark and smelly rooms, or in hotel suites miles away. Presently a state boss fights his way out to his delegation on the floor, and tells his slaves what is to be voted on, and how they are to vote."

But if not the convention, what? By what means shall the parties choose their Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates?

The answer of the reformers, from La Follette to Kefauver, is a national mandatory presidential primary, held on the same day in all states and under uniform Federal law. "Abolish the caucus and the convention," La Follette said in a speech in 1897. "Go back to the first principles of democracy; go back to the people. Substitute for both the caucus and the convention a primary election—held under the sanctions of law that prevail at the general elections. . . . The nominations of the party will (then) not be the result of compromise or impulse, or evil design . . . but the candidates of the majority, honestly and fairly nominated."

Said Kefauver in 1953, "Let's hand them [the bosses] a death blow by taking the Presidential election out of the smoke-filled rooms and the rigged convention halls, and placing them, via the national primary method, firmly in the hands of the people."

IN THE half century between La Follette and Kefauver, many eminent voices have been raised for a national presidential primary system to replace the national convention. Theodore Roosevelt, smarting from his 1912 humiliation, was a stout adherent of the idea. So was Charles Evans Hughes. Woodrow Wilson, in his first message to Congress, called for national legislation to "provide for primary elections throughout the country at which the voters of the several parties may choose their nominees for the Presidency without the intervention of conventions."

La Follette, Roosevelt, Hughes, Wilson—these are powerful names to enlist in a cause for better government. Nevertheless, history has stubbornly refused to follow their mandate. Since 1916, when Presidential primaries of one sort or another were held in twenty-two states, the primary movement has ebbed to the point where it is conceded only a peripheral role in the nomination of Presidential candidates. Some students think that the public opinion polls are at least as influential as the primaries.

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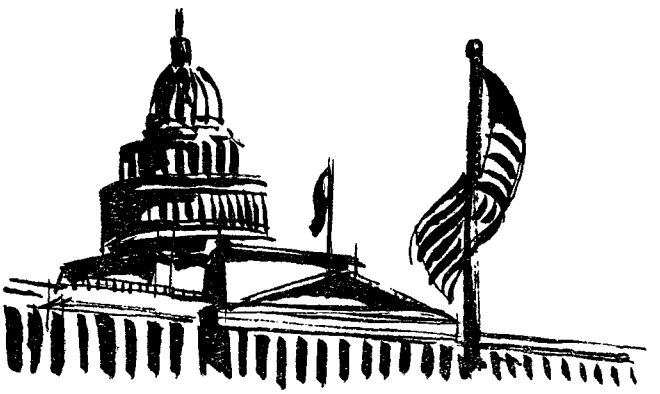
By contrast, the once-excoriated national convention, despite its sideshow hurly-burly, its maneuverings, and its undemocratic back rooms, smoke-filled and otherwise, is still the institution that selects the party's Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates and the place where the political regiments are readied for the battle. It is natural to wonder why the convention, which is certainly subject to some of the abuses claimed by its critics, has proved more durable than the democratic reform that was to replace it.

One answer seems to be that no one has yet formulated a proposal for national primaries that did not raise more difficulties than it purported to solve. Many plans have been put forward, one of the latest being that of Senator Kefauver, who would have Presidential nominating primaries held in all the states on the same day and under identical rules. Voters would vote for delegates irrevocably committed to specific Presidential candidates. At the ensuing national convention (unlike the earlier reformers, Kefauver would not do away with the convention entirely), the delegates would be firmly pledged for the first ten ballots. After that, they would be permitted to vote for any one of the top three candidates as measured by the total number of votes cast in the primaries across the nation.

Many objections have been raised against this, and similar proposals. One is the strain on candidates who would feel obliged to campaign in a large number of states almost simultaneously. Another stumbling block is the possibility that an unwieldy number of candidates might compete (fifty favorite sons, for instance), making a run-off primary necessary. A run-off would mean three separate national Presidential election campaigns in each election year, which might be disruptive to orderly government. The alternative would be to declare the high man the winner, even if he got only ten per cent of the vote. Another difficulty would center on the nomination of the Vice Presidential candidate, a problem which would raise a host of questions of its own.

Anticipating some of these objections, Professor P. Orman Ray has proposed that the national presidential primaries come *after* the party conventions. The conventions would pick five or six men who would appear on the primary ballots. The person getting the highest popular vote would be the party candidate for President, and the second highest would be the Vice Presidential candidate. But this ingenious plan has deficiencies, too. It might allow a convention to choose five or six men admirably representative of various interest groups but none of whom had a truly national reputation. As Professor D. W. Brogan has pointed out, the fact that the conventions have to decide on only one candidate makes them more responsible than they would be otherwise. "To allow it [the convention] the freedom of nominating six would be rash indeed," he observes.



IN HIS *The American President,* Sidney Hyman asserts that nothing "turns the argument against the nominating convention and in favor of the direct primary. For the convention upholds in an extra-legal way the constitutional concept on which our government is based: that majorities and minorities alike shall have a limited initiative and a limited veto. Each, that is, shall give a little and take a little in reaching an agreement of the moment; and each shall keep open the avenue for a continuous re-examination of what was agreed upon, until dissent from the majority decree is dissipated and a natural consensus is realized.

"Could a direct primary do this in the particular choice of a presidential candidate? Could it gather together and bring to bear on that choice the concurrent voices of a people infinitely varied in temperament and material needs? . . . The nominating convention alone appears to be structurally adequate for this work . . . If it were abolished, the conversations it makes possible between transcontinental interests, the common language it gives to them, the common means of self protection with which it arms them, the compromises it imposes on them would also come to an end. A Babel would rise on the debris . . ."

The national convention survives not because it is a conscious masterpiece of political science, nor because it is perfect, but because it succeeds in doing tolerably well a job of immense difficulty and complexity. It is, indeed, subject to manipulation by pressure groups. Venal forces have undoubtedly made themselves felt at more than one convention. Conventions have sometimes bypassed outstanding men in favor of others more "available." Nevertheless, in the absence of any alternative method which will command the respect of practicing politicians and political scientists, the convention will unquestionably remain the instrument by which the great political parties arrive at the most momentous decision they are ever called upon to make—the choice of a man who is to be, God and the electorate willing, President of the United States.

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SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE U-2

THE U-2 INCIDENT may have marked a turning point in international relations. No one can recall another case in which one nation owned up to spying on another or in which a head of state accepted personal responsibility for an act of espionage.

Until last month, that sort of blunt admission was unheard of in international relations. But we made it, and perhaps in doing so, we opened a new era in the history of diplomacy. I wonder now whether the historians of the future will be as harsh on the Administration as so many commentators, including me, were. For the U-2 incident, with all its strange twists, may have dramatized the fact as nothing else has that war between the great nations has been effectively outmoded by the nuclear facts of life.

Of course the Soviet leaders, political and military, announced that there would be terrible reprisals if there were any more such incidents. They could hardly do less. If a Soviet plane were shot down over Kansas, I suspect that our leaders would talk the same way, because they could hardly do less, either. But the important aftermath of the incident is that no Soviet plane is likely to be found flying over Kansas, nor are any more American planes likely to be shot down over Russian territory. That kind of espionage, now that it has been openly acknowledged, has become obsolete. And well that it has, for it represented the kind of "brinkmanship" that could lead to the famous war-by-accident that terrifies both sides. Had Mr. Eisenhower followed traditional procedure and not acknowledged the espionage, there might have been a succession of similar "incidents" and one of them could have been fatal. Now that we all know where we stand, the possibility of an inadvertent war has been diminished.

Of course, Mr. Eisenhower paid a high personal price. He was reviled by the Soviet leader, who took excessive advantage of the Administration's ineptness, and hopes for peace arising from the Summit meeting were blasted into smithereens. But Mr. Eisenhower must have known that he was subjecting himself to this possibility when he authorized the extraordinary admission, and apparently he was willing to pay the price. The Soviets' propaganda triumph may, in the long run, be outshadowed by the long-range advantage to the United States. Premier Khrushchev, rather than General Eisenhower, may have fallen into a trap.

But if it was a trap that put off the possibility of war, as I think it was, then it may have been welcome even to the bellicose Khrushchev, for the Russians don't want war any more than we do. Their problem, like ours, is that they can not admit that they are ready to accept almost anything but war because to accept war is to accept something like annihilation.

We are both playing a terribly dangerous game. Armed to the teeth, with all the conventional foreplay that leads to war, we are both determined to stay out of war. And this is the way things will have to be until we can find some sort of substitute for war.

Can it be done? One thing is certain, if it is to be done it will require radical breaks with pre-nuclear thinking. The rules of the game the nations have long played were based on the fact that war was the *ultima ratio*. With war effectively outlawed as a "solution" to anyone's problem, these rules are not always helpful. It is within this context, I believe, that the remarkable admissions made by the United States in the U-2 case must be judged. We took a chance in acknowledging the espionage, fully conscious, I presume, of what the immediate Russian reaction would be. In doing so, the whole problem of traditional spy activities, and the frightful possibilities of their setting off the war nobody wants, was brought into the limelight.

If I am right in believing that the monstrousness of nuclear warfare has made war itself unacceptable to all sides, the most serious problem we have is to eliminate the possibilities of accidental war, especially espionage which could spark such an accident.

Paradoxically enough, in accepting responsibility for the spy flight that failed, we succeeded in burdening the Soviets with a comparable responsibility. In effect our admissions amounted to a recognition of the fact that times have changed and the lonely spy, his suicide pill ready for swallowing, is no longer a single agent; his very presence in the world is a threat to the uncertain peace that we are managing to maintain, despite tensions, despite profound rivalries. Our acknowledging him and taking responsibility for his activities amounted to a recognition that the situation is too dangerous for any modern nation to live by the old "rules." In effect we said: "There must either be open skies, or you are playing with the possibility of accidental war: we all are."

Of course the immediate reaction to this break with the unwritten laws which govern the dark arts of spying was one of wonder. The Administration was almost universally accused of bungling on a colossal scale. I fell right into line on this. It seemed to me as to everyone I knew that a terrible mistake had been made. I still think the Administration's performance was inept. But I am having second thoughts, as this column has made evident. I am wondering whether the U-2 admissions were as blundering as they first seemed to be.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Truth, Charity and the Press

The Catholic Press Association recently held its golden jubilee convention in Washington, D.C. At a pontifical Mass celebrated in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception by Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, the sermon on "Truth in Charity" was preached by Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle of Washington, D.C. Because of its obvious implications for a variety of currently debated issues, the text of Archbishop O'Boyle's sermon is presented below. —THE EDITORS.

WHEN God in His infinite wisdom sought out Saul, the Apostle and teacher of the nations, He followed a pattern that was highly symbolic. Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus. As a result of this vision, Saul was blinded. Only upon his appeal to the early Church, as instructed by the Saviour, did his sight return. In a dramatic fashion he learned that faith is a passage from darkness to light.

The symbolism of this incident must have burned deeply into the soul of St. Paul, for time and again he contrasts the wisdom of the Gospel with the wisdom of the world. When he preached Christ crucified, it was foolishness to the world. But to those that were called, it was the power and wisdom of God. He wrote, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." St. Paul emphasized that the unique contribution of the Christian message is so transcendent that anything else seems almost nothing by comparison. In this approach, we find a profound lesson for the Catholic Press. . . .

If we are to preach the Christian message, our approach must be as unique as the faith we represent. Our aim must be integrated Christian teaching. It is not enough to report incidents and happenings that bear upon the externals of religion. . . . The very life of the Church and the shining truth of our Faith must be reflected in our pages.

Our theme might well be, in the words of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII, to speak the truth in charity. "Go forth and teach all nations." To speak the truth in season and out of season, to witness the sublime message of the Gospel, to be the light of the world, a city set upon a mountain, this is the teaching mission of the Church. And our press has been delegated to share in this mission.

The truth we preach should be the entirety of the moral law. At times we have been criticized for the narrowness of our interests. Some say that we are concerned mostly with the institutional interests of the Church and certain obvious segments of the moral law. It is charged that we are preoccupied with Communism, divorce, birth control, indecent literature, and similar readily identifiable evils. But we are alleged to be less interested in other problems such as civic corruption, racial discrimination, the festering sores of city slums, the plight of the immigrant and the refugee, and the needs of hungry people elsewhere in the world.

TO the extent that there is truth in these charges, we should be anxious to broaden our concern for the moral law. I recognize that certain types of moral truths are easier to treat than others. Communist persecution of the Church, for example, is so obviously wrong that no sensible person would question our position on it. By contrast, while the evils fostered by city slums are equally clear, it is often difficult to determine proper remedies.

Such difficulties are inherent in any application of moral principles to complex issues of the temporal order. To apply principles wisely, three conditions must be present.

We must know all the moral principles involved. We can fall into dangerous oversimplification if we seize only upon obvious principles and neglect others that may be equally pertinent.

Next, we must have a competent and balanced grasp of the facts involved. Sound moral principles can be wrongly applied when we have inadequate factual knowledge of a given problem.

Finally, we need to exercise the virtue of prudence in seeking remedies for the evil in question. Prudence involves reasonable judgment in the light of all available alternatives. It is no help to come up with a solution that seems ideal in the abstract, but which is ill-suited to the concrete case before us.

When moral principles are applied to complex issues of the temporal order, it is not unusual that men of good will disagree. For example, I doubt that everyone interested in the cause of racial justice agrees on certain tactics used to obtain this end. Yet it is most unjust to impugn the motives of good men when actually we only disagree with their judgment. In the words of Pope Pius XII, in the Catholic press, "no one will condemn another because he does not agree with his opinion, much less challenge his loyalty."

One of the most delicate problems we face today is our judgment on controversies involving the Catholic

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Church. For reasons well known to all of us, much is being said today about the status of the Church in American society. It would be a mistake were we to react to such discussions in a shortsighted manner. The temptation will be great to treat such issues in the immediate context of the moment. We could devote all our attention to the one question of the political rights of Catholics in our democracy.

To take such a narrow viewpoint would be to miss an opportunity for important long-range gains. Even though some of our critics give evidence of prejudice, we must always remember that our reactions will be observed by a much wider circle of readers. We can win a battle and lose a war. We can score a point in partisan controversy, and yet alienate others by our lack of moderation and humility.

ISSUES broader and more vital than political controversy have put the spotlight on the Church today. The forthcoming ecumenical council, and the appeal of the Holy Father for Christian unity, have focused attention upon the Church throughout the world. Searching questions will be asked. Accusations will be made. Unsavory points of history, both ancient and contemporary, will be paraded before the public eye. Even though some who criticize give evidence of bad faith, it would be a disastrous error to assume that every inquirer or critic is so motivated.

As confession of sin is good for the soul, the public acknowledgment of error is a powerful force for winning critics. Our Holy Father has repeatedly asked proponents of Christian unity to approach this problem in humility and charity. He asks that we be more ready to confess our own mistakes than to seek out the faults of others. Surely this is the approach that harmonizes best with the spirit of the Gospels and Epistles. Arrogance repels. Humility attracts.

At all times, we should speak in charity. St. Paul tells us that: "Charity is patient, is kind; . . . thinks no evil; does not rejoice over wickedness, but rejoices with the truth; bears with all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things . . ."

In the same vein, Pope John was speaking in this spirit in his recent talk to the Lenten preachers of Rome. He warned them to treat evil infrequently, to mention it once or twice when necessary, but to dwell upon virtue and goodness. We are to be sparing with truths that wound, and generous with those that heal. Denunciation may be needed on rare occosions, but encouragement is always welcomed. How often Our Lord spoke of mercy—Blessed are the merciful—I will have mercy and not sacrifice; how infrequently did He condemn!

Some may object that this is a soft and easy Christianity. But the Gospels are not soft. Those who would follow Christ must take up their Cross daily. They are disciples of one who had not whereon to lay His head. They are the seed that must die to live. They must expect persecution and exile. And in all this they must have the courage to say: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

The explanation of this paradox is both simple and profound. As we grow in love of the crucified Christ, we become ever more aware of our own sins, and ever more forgiving of the weaknesses of others. Our model is not the Pharisee, who recites his virtues and scorns others for their sins, but rather the Publican, whose sole prayer was: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

As we are sparing in condemnation, so likewise we are tolerant with those who disagree with us. This is true above all with those who are our brethren in the faith. When fellow Catholics hold opinions different from ours in matters that are not of faith, it may often be necessary to express our reasons for dissent. But we should never use the language of scorn and bitterness in defending our views.

WE may have more than one occasion to ponder this message in the months to come, as attacks upon the Church in the United States become more frequent and violent. The temptation will be great to reply in kind, and to return insult for insult. These are the weapons of the world, and they have been used by kings and emperors whose kingdoms and empires crumbled into dust, as will the empire headed by the leader of godless Communism. Yet the Church, with its martyrs and saints, lives and thrives. And it is strongest when it relies upon the weapons of faith, and not upon the patronage and aid of the powerful of this earth.

It is not important to the Church that the symbols of secular power accrue to its sons. But it is vital that we so comport ourselves that the truth and vitality of our Faith becomes evident to all. From this point of view, the humiliation of persecution, based on half-truths and all but forgotten lies, can be a blessing, if only we accept it in the spirit of Christ. Here is a real challenge to the Catholic press and to all our faithful.

If by our quiet dignity, our charity, our compassion, our mercy, we give the lie to false charges against us, such attacks will boomerang upon those making them. Our manner of acting will be more eloquent than a thousand sermons in our search for unity of all Christians in truth. We can show that our only concern is for souls, and not political power or earthly riches.

These, then, are some of the implications of the theme of the Holy Father: to speak the truth in charity. In this way, we teach the fullness of our Faith. We preach the wisdom of the spirit, not the wisdom of this world. Our light shall shine before men. They shall know the truth, the truth that makes men free.

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THE SCREEN

AMERICANA

ALTHOUGH most of the good films seem to be coming from abroad lately, some American producers are countering by concentrating on themes in which they are particularly adept: the local scene in the American past. Their new releases are not averse to pointing out mistakes made by Americans in their attitudes and thinking, and since some of these mistakes and attitudes are carried over into the present, these historical films have an urgency that makes them doubly welcome.

John Ford, very much at home in the Arizona locale and the post-Civil War period, uses them effectively again in "Sergeant Rutledge," his latest picture, which is not top-drawer Ford but does have some fine cinematic moments and some thoughtful reflections on racial tensions. The plot, revealed through a series of flashbacks, concerns the court-martial of a Negro sergeant who is accused not only of the rape of a sixteen-year-old girl but also of the murder of the girl and her father. The military trial goes badly for the sergeant, who was a freed slave and a first-rate soldier, because of mounting evidence against him and because of racial bias.

Under John Ford's direction, Woody Strode gives a magnificent performance in the title role in spite of the fact that scriptwriters Willis Goldbeck (who also produced the film with Patrick Ford) and James Warner Bellah make such a paragon of Sergeant Rutledge that he is hardly believable as a mortal man. Also outstanding in the large cast are Jeffrey Hunter as Rutledge's friend and defense counsel, Willis Bouchey as the colonel determined to be fair and not turn the court-martial into a sensational public show, and Carleton Young as the prosecuting captain who tries to use prejudice to his advantage. Director Ford is less effective with the women in the cast, especially Constance Towers, who appears as a character witness for the defense, and Billie Burke, who caricatures the role of the presiding officer's fluttery wife. As a movie, "Sergeant Rutledge" is uneven—with some suspenseful courtroom scenes, some very exciting battle sequences that incorporate stunning Technicolar shots of Monument Valley backgrounds, and some character sketches that only pad the running time. But for its eloquent plea for justice for a minority group "Sergeant Rutledge" deserves both attention and applause.

STILL dealing with racial problems, but moving farther west and a few years later, "Walk Like a Dragon" deals with the ambiguous position of Chinese immigrants in a small California town. Well produced and directed by James Clavell, who also wrote the script with Daniel Mainwaring, this is a minor film that is much more outspoken on the white man's smug assumption of superiority than are most of the elaborate big movies. Its plot centers on a Westerner of some conscience who buys a pretty Chinese girl at a San Francisco slave market to save her from prostitution. But then his problem is what to do with her; and when he can't get rid of her, he takes her with him to the village of Jericò to be a servant for his mother. His problems really start when he is attracted to the girl but still has no tolerance for her "inferior race."

Although "Walk Like a Dragon" is much too talky for a movie, it is very well acted by Jack Lord as the conscientious but biased American, Josephine Hutchinson as his fair-minded mother, Nobu McCarthy as the lovely girl from China, and James Shigeta as a young Chinese who also falls in love with this girl and is determined to win her even if he has to use a gun to do it. The solution evades the main issue, but the film is not afraid to call a spade a spade and to point out that members of a democracy are sometimes not half as democratic as they think they are.

ABOUT thirty years later another group of immigrants and new Americans were having their problems in New York City, where the inhabitants of Little Italy on the Lower East Side were terrorized by a group of their own compatriots known as the Black Hand. "Pay or Die," a thriller made by producer-director Richard Wilson, concentrates on the efforts of Lt. Joseph Petrosino to end these terrorist activities. Like Wilson's successful semi-documentary picture of last year, "Al Capone," his new film also has a sound documentary atmosphere in tracing the experiences of Petrosino from 1906, when he formed the Italian Squad who served as plainsclothesmen and succeeded in convicting and deporting many of the Black Handers, to 1909, when the courageous policeman was killed in Sicily where he had gone determined to establish the link between the Mafia there and the Black Hand here.

Ernest Borgnine is excellent as the tough, hard-working police lieutenant, an Italian-American who is sensitive about the misbehavior of Italians in their new country. He is surrounded by a large cast that includes Zohra Lampert, a lovely newcomer, as the girl of his choice, Al Austin, as his friend and rival for this girl's hand, and many others as good Italian-Americans and as gangsters of the early 1900 model. Richard Collins's screenplay, which is based on the factual story of Petrosino, has an authentic ring, and while it gives practically no sociological explanation for the behavior of these immigrants it does give a vivid portrait of their lives. Along with the violence,

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Richard Wilson has succeeded in giving his picture warmth and vitality. As grim as many of its incidents are, "Pay or Die" by no means paints all Italians as members of the Black Hand, Mafia or future gangster groups.

SOME thirty years after this, Americans were still trying to stop the wasteful loss of life and property. "Wild River" describes not the building of the dams and the harnessing of the destructive Tennessee River in the 1930's but the efforts of the T.V.A. and one agent in particular to persuade one woman and her family to move from an island that will soon be under water. As long as producer-director Elia Kazan sticks to this subject, "Wild River" is a powerful and moving film in which the performance of Jo Van Fleet, as the eighty-year-old matriarch, stands out as a rocky monument as magnificent as the figure she is portraying. But when Paul Osborn's script dallies with the love affair between the government agent and the matriarch's granddaughter, the movie loses sight of the main issues and becomes just another sexy thriller of no particular depth or significance. Most of "Wild River" is a beautifully-photographed study of the Tennessee locale and the fight that people make against change they don't understand. Players like Montgomery Clift, Lee Remick, Albert Salmi, Frank Overton and the others are lost before the outstanding figure of Jo Van Fleet; and "Wild River," which should have been a first-rate sociological film, is just another try defeated by its extra-curricular meandering.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

EXPRESSIONISM AS STYLE

OF THOSE DIVERSITIES in excellence by which any event in theater may command us, none is so rare, and so often wanting, as unity of style, and the security with which a single aesthetic mode has been imposed on the revival of Miss Sophie Tradwell's "Machinal" quite gives the occasion its uncommon staying power. Miss Treadwell's parable of spiritual isolation and social violation—a success of esteem in 1928—is not, I venture to say, a work of any specific dramatic complexity: its insights stand directly in the line of naturalism, and its protest—against "the tyranny of mathematical thought, belief in causality and technical progress, in fact against the mechanization of civilization"—has entered, at this point of experience, the realm of received ideas.

What is arresting about the piece is its form, or rather disposition of a form, and it is not irrelevantly that I have chosen that last quotation from an essay on Expressionism by its distinguished historian, Mr. J. P. Hodin. The Expressionist mode, which Mr. Hodin sees as hostile to the rational method elsewhere so dominant in the modern formative will, is a style which appears in times of great spiritual tension. It is preoccupied with personality; in psychology, it would experience by empathy. Its greatness, as Mr. Hodin wrote of the Norwegian Expressionist Edvard Munch, is "to have restored the human idea to the center of painting." In art, Sir Herbert Read observed, its testimony may be impressively tragic, sometimes excessively neurotic or sentimental.

This flux of emotion, and constancy of human image, however ambiguous, give a singularity also to the theatrical manifestations of Expressionism. Miss Treadwell—surely on the evidence of the jagged textures of "Machinal," the runes of social banality which are its dialogue, the very grille of determinism through which its heroine is seen—doubtless would assent to Kokoschka's melancholy prophecy that "there will be no portrait left of modern man because he has lost his face and is turning towards the jungle." Yet against this torrent of dark knowledge, she has kept alive a certain lyric pressure, consciousness of waste and possibility perhaps, that give the play its dilation and density of pathos, bring it, indeed, within the periphery of tragic statement.

It is Miss Dolores Sutton's part to make of this still, sad music the fluent, *disponsible* element, and she does so with a baffled grace and piety, an extremity of spiritual quest, most affecting. She is the necessary enemy in a production—by Mr. Gene Frankel and Miss Sophie Maslow—elsewhere a complete act of stylistic perception; a ritual of formalism, social indifference and urban grotesquerie which concentrates still much of the moral outrage of contemporary radicalism. Indeed, the very absence of the doctrinaire socialism and subverting allure of that other stylistic child of its times, "The Seven Deadly Sins," allows "Machinal" to command a sharper and more desolate poetry. It seems, as does the talent of Miss Treadwell, a dramatic "sport," neither continuing nor establishing a tradition, but rather content to let everything in it burn coldly with the passion and grief of an alien vision. *(At the Gate Theater, Second Avenue at Tenth Street.)*

RICHARD HAYES.

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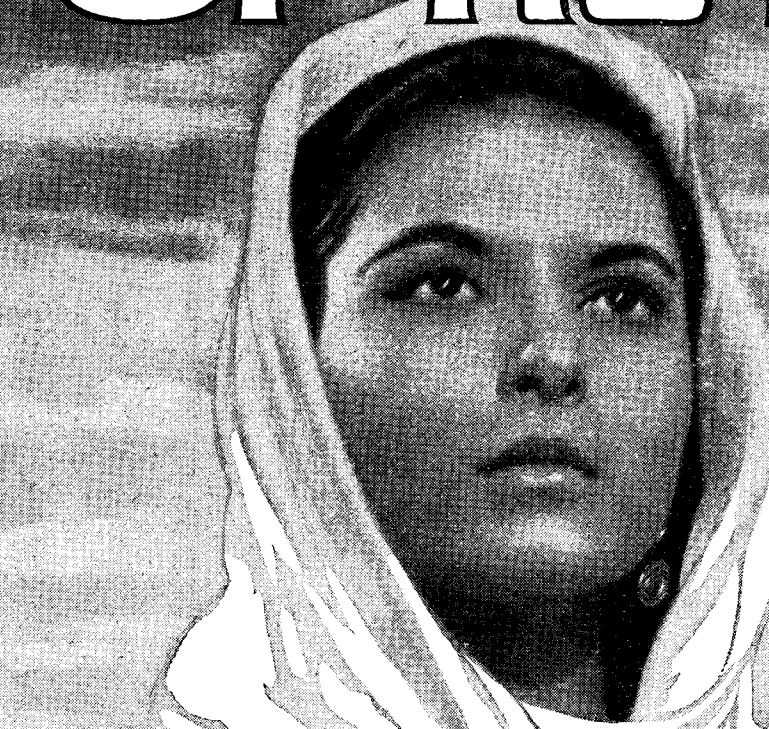

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The Terrible Logic of Auschwitz

COMMANDANT OF AUSCHWITZ, by Rudolf Hoess. World. $4.50.

BY DEREK MORGAN

IN THE summer of 1941 Rudolf Hoess was having troubles with his superiors and it was to avoid further conflicts that he was sent out to organize a war-time project near the little Polish village of Oswiecim. His job was unromantic and uncongenial and he was constantly hampered by red tape and bureaucratic muddling—a handicap that anyone who has served in any army will easily recognize and sympathize with. That he succeeded so well in transforming a run-down operation into a model of efficient organization is a tribute to his single-mindedness and capacity for hard work in depressing circumstances. The pride of achievement that shows through in this, his autobiography, is justified.

In brief, Hoess was required to set up equipment and facilities to handle a highly complex processing operation on as many as nine thousand units of raw material per day.

It was an unusual operation and he had little in the way of precedent to guide him, for the units of raw material were human beings and the finished product consisted of ground ashes, which were taken away in trucks to the Vistula, where they drifted away and dissolved. The German name for Oswiecim is Auschwitz, and in eighteen months Commandant Hoess personally supervised the massacre of two million people there.

Raised by devout Catholic parents, Hoess was intended for the priesthood. He was only fifteen when the First World War began, but he pestered his mother until she allowed him to enroll as an auxiliary with the Red Cross. He used to meet the hospital trains coming back from the front and go among the wounded passing out food and tobacco.

A year later, he managed to deceive the recruiting authorities about his age and joined the regiment in which his father and grandfather had served. He tells of his shock when he first saw a comrade killed and of the dumb calm that descended upon him when he himself first killed an enemy—"a broad-shouldered Indian with a black beard." He soon learned that the first duty of an officer is to conceal his immediate human reactions and to give his men an example of icy calm.

In June, 1934, his plans for a career in farming were interrupted when he was called to active duty in the S.S. and assigned to concentration camp duties—it seemed to the authorities that he might, by training and unhappy personal experience, be well qualified. Hoess himself thought otherwise: "I felt too much sympathy for the prisoners . . . I had myself lived their life too long." Nevertheless, his duty seemed clear. The camps were even viler than the prison he had been in for six years himself.

Then war came again, and in due time Hoess was sent to Auschwitz to supervise an existing camp and to build a new camp for prisoners of war.

Meanwhile, of course, the "Jewish action" had begun—a fantastic challenge in terms of organization. Only a man well-schooled in the need for coolness and singleness of purpose could have created the miracle of efficiency that Auschwitz represents.

He was frequently hamstrung by red tape and inefficiency, and interrupted by visiting officers who in the midst of Hoess's crushingly long and hard work day, wanted to sit around and discuss whether it was all really necessary. How could a soldier allow himself to wonder whether it was necessary when the dark trains kept rolling into camp day after day? The commandant of Auschwitz was not expected to philosophize; his men looked to him for a calmness amid the unpleasant necessities of military action, and like a good soldier, he thought in terms of duty—and of the constant drudgery of ever-mounting schedules.

And there it is. There is the simple terror of this book. For Hoess' story reads like one of those trick problems in logic, in which at some point a carefully concealed false deduction has been made and the whole train of reasoning has been thrown hopelessly awry. We begin, reasonably enough, with an axiomatic statement that a soldier cannot afford to think in human terms of the enemy he shoots in battle. At the end, Hoess is explaining, as calmly as if he were drawing circles of probable H-bomb destruction on a map of Manhattan or Moscow, how best to go about exterminating two million human beings.

The Bounty of the French Novel

FOREIGN BODIES. By Jean Cayrol. Putnam. $3.

By WILLIAM DUNLEA

IF THEORY has been the bane of the novel in France, psychology has been its bounty. Even a serious trifle like *Foreign Bodies,* which purely as a work of fiction is anything but full-blooded, can serve to reiterate the psychological preeminence of the French novel—a preeminence which owes little or nothing, by the way, to the influence of Freud.

Although Jean Cayrol is a figure of some influence in contemporary French fiction, this is the first U.S. publication of one of his novels; it is his most recent, and according to those French authorities who have been quoted for this occasion, his most *reussi.* Ultimately, it is hardly more than a stunt.

As a fiction, therefore, it is difficult to say off hand who will find it interesting. It will turn away stick-

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lers for linear plot, since the narrator is constantly changing the script; one could say that it will interest those whose preference is for indirect plot, if one were at all sure that there are such readers; even those who have learned to approach all technical departures with tolerance are likely to be held by the book more from irritation than interest—certainly more than pleasure—once they are aware of the author's game. Yet this is one of those uncommon novels that cannot be read cursorily the first time, and one of those still rarer novels that compel, if through sheer annoyance, an immediate second reading.

These are the sort of "confessions" that are written at five minutes to zero in the life of the narrator; in these cases a few things are bound to get distorted, but here almost everything does. As he reconstructs or invents the past, Gaspard keeps reminding himself of the late hour, suggesting though never naming his apprehension. He has presumably slain his mistress, though this, like everything else about his story, is never made explicit. Yet reality asserts itself through the narrator's very attempts to modulate it.

Gaspard is a shabby rapscallion who has made his own bed of thorns. Guilt has helped to make a chameleon out of him, but he is essentially conscienceless; he was always dissatisfied with himself, but greed suppressed his self-knowledge; his disgust with bourgeois society—in whose service he has always been, even in the most menial sense—is merely sour grapes. Without ever being wicked, he has engaged in every form of petty crime, coming into his own as a black-market profiteer in Bordeaux during the Occupation, and receding into the dregs of the Paris underworld after the war.

There is no question that he has contempt for the law; yet there is always the suspicion that he is trying to inflate his misdeeds and that while his aim is certainly not to justify them in any moral sense, he is desperately trying to justify his own existence by making them out worse than they were; thus it is significant that his only abiding grievance is that people never noticed him no matter what he did, that society wouldn't even bestir itself to prosecute him.

With a little patience, the book will yield up the full dimension of its insights and perhaps a modest degree of pleasure. Is it worth the application? I must admit that I am still doubtful.

Western Epic?

THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES. By Harry Brown. Knopf. $4.50.

By JOHN P. SISK

THE TERM "epic" has been applied to western fiction and drama so indiscriminately that it has nearly become a synonym for "western." Thus the term and the genre are debased for the writer who sees the possibility for genuine epic treatment. What can he do that has not already been done badly too many times? Harry Brown attempts to solve this problem in *The Stars in Their Courses* by writing a western that is patterned on the legends of the Trojan wars.

On the surface his novel is not exceptional. Percy Randal, a prosperous and respected rancher in post-Civil War Texas, has three handsome sons and an eccentric daughter. He gets into trouble with the Lacy Boys, Alan and Mark, and other neighboring ranchers when they suspect that he has dammed up the river they all depend on and that his son Pax has carried off Mark's fabulously beautiful wife Ellen. The Lacy's, aided by master gun-slinger Arch Eastmere, organize the ranchers against the Randals. Before the warring parties are reconciled the three Randal boys, Alan, Lacy, Eastmere and many other stout riders lie dead.

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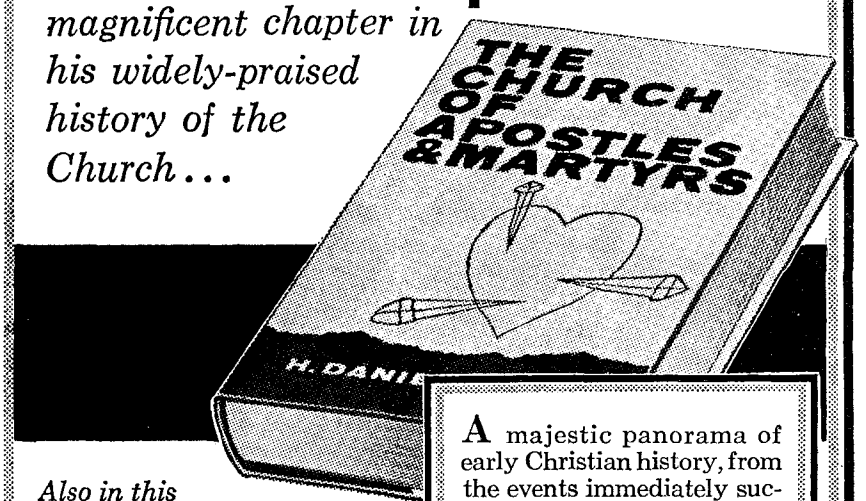

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If this were all there were to the story you could find something very like it in any issue of *Real West.* But Mr. Brown is a talented writer, and besides he has Homer and Aeschylus to lean on, or, perhaps I should say, to glance ingeniously off of. By superimposing his story upon the matter of Troy he achieves effects that may be unique in western fiction—perhaps too unique for those readers who will find his often skillful variations on epic devices baffling or irritating.

Stylistically the novel is a strange blend of realistic, lyric and epic styles, but I have other problems. I am not sure whether Mr. Brown is using his parallel to enrich the epic potential of his story or to underline sardonically the meanness of its characters and action.

It is interesting to see how adaptable the ancient Greek legends are here to certain preoccupations native to American fiction: to the myth of the good guy who hasn't got a chance in the bad world; to the myth of the great golden sex idyl whose glorious promise ends in violent death; to the conviction that the closer one gets to reality the more violent and meaningless experience becomes. The novel, in fact, (like Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*), has the effect of making the heroic past seem uncomfortably parochial and contemporary.

In any event, Mr. Brown's fine war story, *A Walk in the Sun,* is a better novel, even if it displays less of the author's virtuosity. It even comes closer to being epic.

REVIEWERS

Derek Morgan is a member of the staff of *The Reporter.* This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.

William Dunlea, a frequent contributor, is a free-lance writer.

John P. Sisk is on the faculty of Gonzaga University, Spokane.

ART

On a Human Scale

IN A LIVELY article on San Francisco that recently appeared in the N.Y. *Times,* Ada Louise Huxtable indicated that one of the chief assets of that uniquely charming American city is that its buildings are on a human scale. This notion is the more compelling because the human factor is indeed one that has suffered near-annihilation in contemporary life; even though human beings have brought it upon themselves it is bitterly missed and its absence unconsciously resented. This is at least as true in the area of art as in any other field. That "dehumanization" of art that Ortega spoke of decades ago has become so widespread that "Portraits from the Museum Collection," an exhibit of portraits at the Museum of Modern Art in N.Y. (from May 4 to June 26), provokes enthusiastic interest by reason of its subject alone.

This exhibit itself, despite the excellence of many of the works displayed, depends rather heavily on that submerged interest in the human scale, on the thirst that a deprived public has for the fresh taste of studies of the individual. During the past fifty years the art of portraiture has been left almost entirely to "fashionable specialists," and the not unexpected result is that there is a scattered air of informal effort about this collection of portraits that the Museum has brought out with the intention, among others, of showing how many good things it keeps in the attic (so to speak) for lack of sufficient space to present them to the public. It is a measure of how strong that submerged interest is that these choice pieces—paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints and photographs—assume a vital coherence simply because they have individual human beings as their subject.

"Approximately one third of the exhibit is devoted to self-portraits" according to the press release from the museum—and this indicates the last stronghold of the human element in contemporary art even more than it indicates the abiding subjec-

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tivity of creative artists. The modern artist, even while "dehumanizing" art, has with few exceptions never let go of the desire to express *himself*.

In my opinion, it is for this reason more than any other that the self-portraits in this exhibit are the most effective ones. There clearly seems to be a more whole-hearted conviction about them. Among the self-portraits, those series in different media by Corinth and Beckmann are among the most powerful; perhaps it is not by chance that they were compatriots of Freud, although they display important differences. The Corinth *Self-Portrait* in oil (1924) has all the lusty conviction of a more humanistic age, and his *Death and the Artist* is a haunting, incisive sketch. The series of self-portraits by Max Beckmann presents the whole life of a man under the grinding impact of his times: they are lucid and penetrating studies, from the 1911 lithograph of a handsome square-faced youth to the poignant bronze head of 1936 that depicts a worn, sensitive face still enquiring before the enigma of existence.

If part of the human interest of such an exhibit is the self-revelation of the artists, perhaps stronger—because we are normally less likely to get it— is the revelation of the personalities of other people. This has all the fascination of gossip, on top of its purely aesthetic value. In this group the mosaic portrait of Father D'Arcy by Elsa Schmid was a great disappointment to me: it has a poster-like simplification and lurid harshness of color; the photograph by Eisenstaedt seemed infinitely more expressive of an intense vitality and subtlety. The same is true, I think, of the portraits of J. Robert Oppenheimer: Arnold Neuman's precise photograph seems a great deal better than the affected intensity of Ben Shahn's brush and ink drawing.

It is perhaps in the group of portraits of Baudelaire that full satisfaction of this form of human curiosity is reached: at least three of the portrayals of that quicksilver poet are enthralling. Duchamp-Villon's bronze head, with its suggestion of dreams and enigmas, is profound in its evocation of the man; Rouault's lithograph is a dark questioning portrayal alluding to the "romantic agony" of the poet in his intense idiom; and the Matisse etching gives a lyric heroic outline in yet another great artist's language.

If, in the view of those contemporary critics who espouse the cause of so-called "pure art" (that is, roughly, art without allusions), portraiture is of necessity a bastard form, it is nevertheless a form very dear to the human heart and one that at this moment in the history of art seems to be an oasis in the desert of dehumanization. What San Francisco is to American cities, this exhibit may well be to the art-viewing public in New York this spring. BETTY KAUFMAN.

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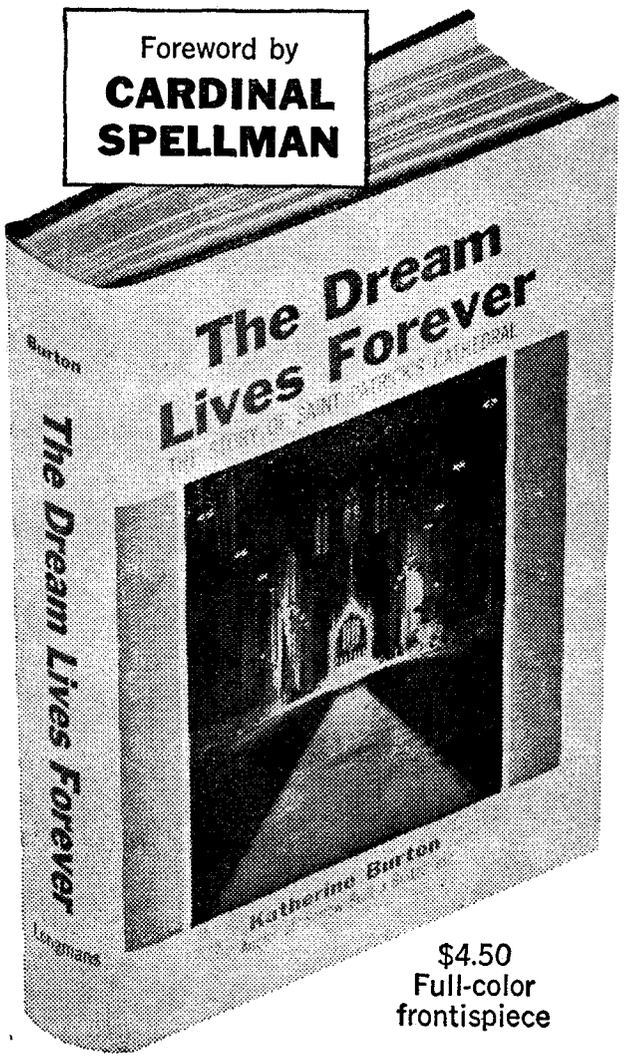

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